

## Dan Leavitt

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From: Carrie Pourvahidi  
Sent: Monday, December 19, 2005 9:57 AM  
To: 'Ellen Unsworth'  
Cc: Dan Leavitt  
Subject: FW: EIR/EIS Comments

-----Original Message-----

From: HSR\_Online\_Comments@hsr.ca.gov [mailto:HSR\_Online\_Comments@hsr.ca.gov]  
Sent: Friday, December 16, 2005 6:03 PM  
To: Carrie Pourvahidi  
Subject: EIR/EIS Comments

Date: 12/16/2005

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### Comments:

I appreciate the California HSRA conducting this additional Program EIR/EIS process for connecting the San Francisco Bay Area to the Central Valley portion of the California High Speed Rail system. However, referencing the illustration on the face (non-address) side of the notice postcard, I think you need to think outside the shaded area when considering connections between the Bay Area and Central Valley.

Certainly the Central Valley portion of the system would replace the current Amtrak/California San Joaquin routes between Sacramento and Bakersfield, extending the rail mode all the way to Los Angeles, possibly beyond to San Diego.

Certainly the Peninsula segment of the Bay Area portion of the system would, in partnership with Caltrain and various regional sources of funds, upgrade the current Caltrain line to higher speeds and electrified propulsion, benefitting both long-distance HSR riders and Caltrain commuters.

It is my understanding that consideration of the Altamont Pass route in this process was mandated by the Legislature and I support that inclusion. In addition to its role as a connector within the HSR system, this route could potentially also benefit Altamont Commuter Express (ACE) riders by making higher speeds and less congestion from freight operations available to them. No doubt such an improved service offering would increase ridership among Central Valley residents commuting into the Bay Area. This potential source of revenue to the HSR system should not be overlooked in the analysis of alternatives. Also, the potential for inclusion of the Dumbarton line, slated to be activated for passenger service using regional funding sources, into the HSR system should not be excluded, especially as a faster connection to San Francisco from the Central Valley via Altamont.

I would also like 2 other potential connections between the Bay Area and Central Valley to be studied in this EIR/EIS: a San Francisco/Oakland/Sacramento connection and a San Jose/Salinas/Paso Robles/Wasco connection.

The Amtrak/California Capitol Corridor service has been growing by leaps and bounds, even though it still takes 4 hours to go from San Jose to Sacramento, a distance that can be traveled by car in just over 2 hours. Inclusion of a San Francisco/Oakland/Sacramento connection would allow the HSR system to replace the Capitol Corridor service with dramatically reduced travel times, and hence increased ridership.

Including a San Jose/Salinas/Paso Robles/Wasco connection (in rough terms) would provide a more direct (and hence faster) route from Los Angeles to the Bay Area and also provide service to Monterey County, which has expressed interest in having Caltrain commute service extended southward to Salinas. Aside from its operational benefits, this connection would also help assuage San Jose's route angst over Altamont, although any Los Banos real estate speculators would be out of luck.

In conclusion, the operative question for this EIR/EIS process is not Altamont OR ..., but Altamont AND ... We should build 3 connectors: San Francisco/Oakland/Sacramento, Altamont, and San Jose/Salinas/Paso Robles/Wasco. Perhaps not all in the Initial Operational Segment (as we used to say in the defense industry), but in the Objective System (that defines the vision for the HSR system at full build-out).